



# Positive Psychology at the Movies: Using Films to Build Virtues and Character Strengths

By Ryan M. Niemiec, Danny Wedding

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Three completely new chapters on "PERMA" (positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment), the 5 core areas of well-being discussed by positive psychologists:

- o Positive Relationships
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More in-depth discussion of film exemplars for each character strength, exploring its dynamics, use for coping, benefits - and now with movie exemplars of overuse and underuse of each strength

New exemplars include Edward in the Twilight series (self-regulation); Robert Downey, Jr.'s Sherlock Holmes (exceptional judgment/critical thinking); Lisbeth Salander in The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo (prudence); The Artist (zest); and dozens more

New appendices listing "Positive Psychology Movies for Children, Adolescents, and Families"; "Movies of the Year" for recent years; and "Positive Psychology Short Films"

More extensive commentary on research and practice for each of the 24 character strengths, now with over 800 scholarly references

Updated charts, references, practitioner resources, and more!

Movies are a powerful and enjoyable medium for learning. This book shows exactly how to use film to learn about the concepts and the real-life benefits of positive psychology, both for self-improvement and in classes or seminars.



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### Editorial Review

#### Review

Need a dose of courage? An injection of humility? A dram of teamwork? Then look no further than the movies for inspiration. *Positive Psychology at the Movies: Using Films to Build Character Strengths and Well-Being* (2nd ed.) is a tightly organized, thematically interesting, and, of course, utterly positive guide to viewing films through the lens of flourishing.

Film is a natural medium by which to illustrate psychological concepts and bear witness to the experiences of (fantastical) others. The book's purpose is to highlight films that portray and inspire character strengths, and it succeeds....exemplar films are discussed and dissected according to their respective key concept, relevant research, signature strengths, strength dynamics, benefits, and coping.

The book lends itself to classroom use, as evidenced by Appendix E, Questions for Classroom, Therapy, and Movie Group Discussions, and by Appendix G, Syllabus of a Positive Psychology Course That Uses Movies. As well, it can be a tool in individual and/or group therapy. --Prof. Debra Merskin, PhD, Associate Professor of Media Studies, School of Journalism and Communication, University of Oregon, in *PsycCRITIQUES*, 2014, Vol. 59, No. 28, Article 6

Ryan Niemiec and Danny Wedding's updated edition of *Positive Psychology at the Movies* is an exploration of the ways that movies can illuminate and portray the principles of positive psychology, especially character strengths...

"[The authors] encourage the reader to watch films with an eye on strengths and well-being. They ask us to watch mindfully instead of passively, and to take lessons from the films and apply them to our own lives... [They] also give practical applications for mining the most character strength knowledge from a film and ways to bring that learning into daily life. There is a great deal of information here.

"The most intriguing part of [the] 470-page book... focuses on the ways in which movies can support Martin Seligman's PERMA model of human flourishing... The learning possibilities are endless. --Bright Dickson, MAPP, Theano Coaching LLC, in *Psychology News Daily*, 2013

A valuable book. As a business consultant and leadership coach, I continually look for ways to help my clients increase their awareness of their leadership style, and how their personality and sense of self informs this awareness. The use of films and clips (including examples from television) are a valuable tool. I have already shared this book with my peers. --Howard A Fox, MA, Fielding Graduate University, in *Doody's Listings and Reviews*, 2013

*Positive Psychology at the Movies* provides a creative way to explore positive psychology principles through the exploration of films [and] an impressive approach to teaching. Any psychology educator will find a plethora of films to use to teach a wide array of psychological concepts and principles that extend beyond Positive Psychology and are legitimised by rigorous research. This book could be used as a form of cinematherapy [and] would certainly be a useful tool to consolidate psychological concepts and inspire behavior change.

"The new inclusions of film exemplars and extended appendices add to the quality of teaching resources that the book provides.

In addition, its stimulating and contemporary presentation should encourage a broader audience including lay people who want to evaluate the meaning of movies. --Melissa Monfries, Counselling and Psychological Health, La Trobe University, in *Australian Journal of Educational & Developmental Psychology*, vol 14, 2014

Positive Psychology at the Movies 2 is an easy, convenient, and fun but serious way to learn about Positive Psychology. Importantly, it provides resources for applying the science to one's own life and for bringing it to others so that all may flourish." --Jeanette Biermann, PhD, Cleveland, OH, in The Ohio Psychologist Review (Nov./Dec. 2014)

A valuable book. As a business consultant and leadership coach, I continually look for ways to help my clients increase their awareness of their leadership style, and how their personality and sense of self informs this awareness. The use of films and clips (including examples from television) are a valuable tool. I have already shared this book with my peers. --Howard A Fox, MA, Fielding Graduate University, in Doody's Listings and Reviews, 2013

#### **About the Author**

Ryan M. Niemiec, PhD, PsyD, is a licensed psychologist in Cincinnati. He is Education Director of VIA Institute on Character, a certified coach with Hummingbird Coaching Services, and a frequent lecturer and workshop leader. He is author of a number of articles and film editor of PsycCRITIQUES. He received a specialization in film studies from Michigan State University.

Danny Wedding, PhD, MPH, trained as a clinical psychologist at the University of Hawaii. He is currently Associate Dean for Management and International Programs at the California School of Professional Psychology,

Alliant University. For many years he was Professor of Psychiatry, University of Missouri-Columbia School of Medicine and Director of the Missouri Institute of Mental Health (MIMH). Dr. Wedding is the author

or editor of 12 books and is editor for PsycCRITIQUES: Contemporary Psychology and APA Review of Books.

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Do you have favorite book? When you have, what is your favorite's book? Guide is very important thing for us to find out everything in the world. Each publication has different aim or goal; it means that book has different type. Some people experience enjoy to spend their time for you to read a book. They are really reading whatever they consider because their hobby will be reading a book. How about the person who don't like reading through a book? Sometime, person feel need book once they found difficult problem or even exercise. Well, probably you'll have this Positive Psychology at the Movies: Using Films to Build Virtues and Character Strengths.

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